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ANNUAL REPORT
of the
Medical Officer of Health
for the Year
1946.

Public Health Officers.

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH:

JAMES L. GREGORY, M.B., CH.B., F.R.F.P.S., D.P.H.,
D.T.M. AND HY.

SANITARY INSPECTOR:

H. V. JAMES, M.I.M. AND CY; ENG.,
CERT. ROYAL SAN. INST.

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BOROUGH OF LUDLOW.

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health, 1946.

1st August, 1947.

MR. MAYOR, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present the Annual Report on the health of the Borough for the year ending 31st December, 1946. It has been drawn up in accordance with the Ministry's Circular, 13/47, dated 13th March, 1947.

The population of the Borough is estimated to be 6,082, and the birth-rate is 18·7. The death-rate is 16·2 and the infant death-rate is 61. Both these latter rates are higher than those for the country as a whole.

The incidence of Infectious Diseases has again been very low indeed and there were no deaths from such diseases. One case of Typhoid Fever was reported but this was contracted outside of the Borough and there was no spread of the disease.

Eight new cases of Tuberculosis were notified and there were six deaths. The death-rate was 0·985 per 1,000 (all forms).

The National Health Services Act, 1946, comes into operation in 1948, and schemes are being drawn up with regard to Ambulance Services and Vaccination and Diphtheria Immunisation by the County Council, who will be responsible for these services. All Hospitals will be taken over by the Hospital Board for the area, who will administer them.

One house was completed by private enterprise in 1946. The Council hope to have sixty-two permanent houses completed in 1947 at Dodmore Lane and Temeside.

The Housing Survey has been completed (July, 1947), and will serve as a guide to the Council as to the extent of the housing problem to be faced in the Borough, both as regards new houses and the repair of old ones.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient servant,

JAMES L. GREGORY,

Medical Officer of Health.

BOROUGH OF LUDLOW.

VITAL STATISTICS.

LIVE BIRTHS—

			Total	M.	F.
Legitimate	...	...	106	56	50
Illegitimate	...	...	8	5	3
			—	—	—
		Totals	114	61	53
			—	—	—

BIRTH-RATE per 1,000 of the estimated population = 18·7.

			Total	M.	F.
STILL BIRTHS—	...	...	8	7	1
			—	—	—

STILL BIRTH-RATE per 1,000 total (live and still) births = 65·6.

			Total	M.	F.
DEATHS—	...	...	99	52	47
			—	—	—

DEATH-RATE per 1,000 of the estimated population = 16·2.

DEATHS FROM PUERPERAL CAUSES—

		Number of Deaths	Rate per 1,000 total Births
(a) From Puerperal Sepsis	...	0	0
(b) From other Puerperal causes	...	1	8·2
		—	—
	Totals	1	8·2
		—	—

DEATHS OF INFANTS UNDER ONE YEAR—

		Number of Deaths	Rate per 1,000 Live Births
(i) Legitimate Infants per 1,000 legitimate births	...	6	56
(ii) Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 illegitimate births	...	1	125
(iii) All Infants per 1,000 total births		7	61
		—	—

DEATHS from—

Cancer (all ages)	...	...	...	13
Measles (all ages)	...	...	...	0
Whooping Cough (all ages)	...	...	...	0
Diarrhoea (under two years)	...	...	...	1
Tuberculosis (all ages)	...	...	...	6

Section A.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

Area (in acres)	966
Estimated Population (mid 1946)	6,082
Number of Inhabited Houses as at 31st Dec., 1946 ...	1,554
Rateable Value of district	£33,615
Product of 1d. Rate	£129/9/11

POPULATION.

The Registrar-General's estimated population of the Borough is 6,082 and this is an increase of 117 over the figure for 1945. The natural increase of the population, *i.e.* excess of births over deaths, was 15.

BIRTHS.

Births notified numbered 114 and this gives a birth-rate of 18·7 per 1,000 of the population. The birth-rate for England and Wales was 19·1.

Eight of the births were illegitimate, which is about half the number in 1945.

DEATHS.

Ninety-nine deaths were registered and this is the same number as in 1945. The death-rate was 16·2 per 1,000 of the population. The rate for England and Wales was 11·5.

The causes of the deaths were chiefly Heart Disease, Cancer and Intra-cranial Vascular Lesions. These three conditions accounted for 59 out of the total 99 deaths.

No comparability factor is supplied for correcting deaths according to age and sex distribution, and therefore no comparison is possible between the crude death-rate in the Borough and that of the country as a whole or of other districts.

Details of the numbers of deaths from the chief causes are given in the table at the end of the report.

STILL BIRTHS.

These numbered eight in all, which is a higher number than for many years, and the still-birth rate of 65 per 1,000 total births is more than double that for the country as a whole. The prevention of still-births is one of the problems which the Health Services concerned with Maternity and Child Welfare have to face, and it is encouraging to note that between 1939 and 1945 the rate for the country fell from 38 to 28 per 1,000 total births.

INFANTILE MORTALITY.

The deaths of seven children took place under the age of one year. This gives a rate (Infantile Mortality Rate) of 61 per 1,000 live births as compared with 35 in 1945 when there were only four infant deaths.

Among the seven deaths were three from Gastro-enteritis and these deaths could probably have been prevented by proper care of the childrens' diet and a higher standard of domestic hygiene. Of the other deaths, three were due to congenital deformities and could not have been prevented.

Taken in conjunction with the high still-birth rate this high rate of Infantile Mortality in Ludlow cannot be considered satisfactory, and it is to be hoped that, with the facilities which are available for every mother in the town at Ante-natal and Infant Welfare Centres, both these rates will show a permanent reduction in future years.

MATERNAL MORTALITY.

One maternal death was notified, giving a rate of 8.2 per 1,000 total births. The rate for England and Wales was 1.43. This is the first maternal death in the Borough since 1942.

Section B.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES.

STAFF.

There are no changes to record.

LABORATORY FACILITIES.

Full use has been made of the Donaldson Hudson Laboratory at the Royal Salop Infirmary, Shrewsbury, during the year, and my thanks are due to Dr. J. A. Fodden and his Staff at the Laboratory.

In April, 1947, the Laboratory was taken over for the Ministry of Health by the Medical Research Council, and it will continue to provide facilities for all Bacteriological work connected with Public Health.

NURSING SERVICES IN THE HOME.

This work is carried out by the Nurses of the two Nursing Associations in Ludlow, both of which are affiliated to the Shropshire Nursing Federation, and details of the work in Ludlow will be found in the report of the Federation.

AMBULANCE FACILITIES.

There has been no change in the provision of Ambulances for patients in Ludlow. Under the National Health Services Act, 1946, Part III, the County Council have prepared a scheme for the Ambulance Services in the County of Salop which will come into being in 1948. The scheme provides for eight ambulances to be kept at Shrewsbury and also for three to be stationed at Ludlow.

At present, the Ambulances available are as follows :-

<i>Ambulance</i>	<i>Station</i>	<i>'Phone No.</i>
St. John's & B.R.C.S.	Ludlow.	Ludlow 184
County Council	Cross Houses	Cross Houses 242
Infectious Diseases	Shrewsbury	Shrewsbury 2510

TREATMENT CENTRES AND CLINICS.

The County Council have a School Clinic at Dinham and also an Infant Welfare Centre and Ante-natal Centre, the days and hours of meeting of these being given below.

Orthopædic cases are also seen at the Clinic and the Tuberculosis Officer also visits once a month. The following attendance figures for 1946 have been supplied by the County Medical Officer :-

ATTENDANCES AT INFANT WELFARE AND ANTE-NATAL CENTRE, 1946

Aged 0-1 years.		Aged 1-5 years		Expectant Mothers.	
1st visits.	Total attend.	1st visits.	Total attend.	1st visits.	Total attend.
122	1,103	88	1,099	22	121

DAYS AND HOURS OF CLINICS.

Centre.	Place.	Days.	Hours.
School Clinic	Dinham, Ludlow	Daily	9—10 a.m.
Infant Welfare	do.	Mondays	10—12 noon & 2—4-30 p.m.
Ante-natal Centre	do.	do.	do.
Venereal Diseases	1, Belmont, Shrewsbury	Tues. & Fri., (Men) Mon. & Wed., (Women)	6—8 p.m. 2—4 p.m.
Tuberculosis Dispensary	17, Belmont, Shrewsbury	Daily	By Appointment

NOTE.—A Doctor is in attendance at the School Clinic, Infant Welfare Centre and Ante-natal Centre on alternate Mondays.

The Tuberculosis Officer also visits Ludlow once a month to see cases by appointment.

An Orthopædic Surgeon from Oswestry attends once a quarter to see cases.

HOSPITAL ACCOMMODATION.

Particulars of the Hospitals available for the inhabitants of Ludlow have been given in previous reports. There have been no changes during the year. The Hospital Boards which will control all hospital services are now being formed throughout the country under the Health Services Act, 1946.

Section C.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

This section of the report deals with Water Supplies, Sewerage and Sewage Disposal, Drainage, Refuse Collection and Disposal and other matters concerned with Environmental Hygiene.

WATER SUPPLY.

The sources of the Town's supply were described in the report for 1945 and in former reports, and there has been no change in the supply.

During the year twelve samples were submitted for bacteriological examination and these all proved satisfactory. No chemical examinations were undertaken during the year.

As in former years, it was found necessary to supplement the Town supply during the year by drawing about 15 million gallons from the Elan Aqueduct (Birmingham Corporation main) which passes close to the town.

Chlorination of all the water used in the town is carried out and this ensures a safe supply from all sources. The raw supply from Burway is polluted, especially after a heavy rain-fall, with animal organic matter but is rendered safe by chlorination as already stated.

The Fountain Spring supply is of considerable natural purity but is chlorinated as an additional safeguard, as is also the Elan Aqueduct water.

The waters are all soft with a $\text{pH} = 7.2$, and are non-corrosive to metals.

SEWERS AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

The sewers were extended for the Dodmore Lane Housing Site, the total new lengths being 410 yards.

During the year steps were taken to rid the town's sewers of rats.

At the disposal works two new sprinklers have been ordered and as considerable damage was done by the flooding of the River Teme in March, 1947, repairs have had to be carried out and a new pump ordered at the pumping station.

A sample of the effluent from the sewage disposal works was taken in August, 1946, and proved to be satisfactory and to conform to the standard laid down for such effluents.

REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL.

A collection of house refuse is made once weekly from all residences and the refuse is disposed of by tipping at a site in Fishmore Road. Collections from restaurants, etc., is made three times a week.

Section D.

HOUSING.

Number of Inhabited Houses	...	...	1,554
Number of Council Houses	...	...	175
New Houses completed in 1946—			
(a) Council Houses	...	...	0
(b) By private enterprise	...	...	1
Number of applications for houses	...	...	353

BUILDING PROGRAMME.

1947. To be completed (Permanent)	...	62
To be commenced (Airey type)	...	56
Plans to be obtained (Permanent)	...	24

Of the 62 permanent type of houses to be completed in 1947, 56 will be at Dodmore Lane and 6 at Temeside.

The 56 Airey houses will be erected at Sandpits Road and the 24 permanent houses, which it is hoped to start the building of early in 1948, will be on the same site.

Only one new house was completed in 1946 and this was by a private builder, but the Council took over and converted into flats four houses in the town. These houses were altered to make five, four, four and three flats, *i.e.* a total of 16 housing units in all.

HOUSING SURVEY.

This was commenced at the end of the year and has now been completed (June, 1947). In all, a total of 1,766 housing

“ units ” have been recorded, and of these 1,166 have been inspected and put into categories. The total number includes a number of flats in which separate families live. Particulars of the categories and the number of houses in each will soon be available.

HOUSING INSPECTIONS.

Mr. James reports that a total of 210 inspections were made under the Housing Act, and that 14 informal notices were served and all of these were complied with.

Section E.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

MEAT.

There are no slaughter houses in the town and all Meat for human consumption is examined at Craven Arms at the slaughter house under the control of the Ministry of Food.

No decision has so far been come to as to whether the central slaughter houses begun during the war are to be continued or not, but it is expected that a decision on this matter will soon be made by the Ministry of Food. What is really needed is a new modern abattoir for a fairly large area, but at present it is not possible to commence the building of such places but it is to be hoped that in time they will be built.

MILK.

There are 13 registered producers in the Borough and 28 visits were paid to the premises during the year. Samples are taken as a routine twice a year and submitted to the methylene blue test (accredited milk standard). If the milk from any premises fails to pass the test a visit is paid and samples taken again until a satisfactory one is procured.

No heat treatment of milk is carried out in the Borough so far, but no doubt this will come in time. (Annual Report for 1943, p. 10).

Milk Producers on register	...	...	13
Milk Shops	...	...	2
Sellers of T.T. Milk	...	...	1
Sellers of Accredited Milk	...	...	2
Inspections of Premises	...	...	28
Notices served	...	...	7
Defects, etc., remedied	...	...	7

ICE CREAM (Heat Treatment, etc.) REGULATIONS, 1947.

These regulations, made by the Minister of Health under the Food and Drugs Act, 1938, came into force on the 1st May, 1947. They deal with precautions to be taken in the preparation and sale of Ice Cream, and are briefly as follows :-

- (a) When a complete cold mix is used which is reconstituted by adding water and nothing else except certain flavouring materials, the reconstituted product must be frozen within an hour. It must be kept at a temperature not exceeding 28 Fahr. until it is sold.
- (b) In other cases, after the ingredients of the product have been mixed together, the mixture must not be kept for more than an hour at a temperature which exceeds 45 Fahr. before being subjected to heat treatment.
- (c) Heat Treatment of Mixture. This consists in raising the mixture to a temperature of 150 Fahr. for 30 minutes or to 160 Fahr. for 10 minutes. It must then be cooled to under 45 Fahr. within $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours and kept at that temperature till the freezing process begins. It must then be kept below 28 Fahr. till sold as in (a) above.

There are four sellers of Ice Cream in the town and they have been notified of the regulations, and samples taken proved satisfactory.

Section F.

PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

As in the previous year there has been no serious outbreak of any Infectious Disease in the Borough. Only 41 notifications of Infectious Diseases were received, and of these 39 were of Whooping Cough.

No cases of Diphtheria were notified and during the year 164 children were immunised against this disease, of whom 90 were under the age of five years and 74 were aged 5—15 years.

The following were the notifications received during the year

Disease.		Cases notified.	Admitted to Hospital.	Deaths.
Whooping Cough	...	39	0	0
Typhoid Fever	...	1	1	0
Food Poisoning	...	1	0	0

The very low incidence of Infectious Diseases during the war years, and since the war, is a striking fact which is not easy

to account for, as most authorities expected that we might have some serious outbreak such as followed the 1914-18 war.

No doubt the general health and nutrition of young children has improved in the last 30 years or more and their resistance to disease increased. We have still, however, to be on our guard against epidemics of every kind, and it is as well to remember that our present freedom from serious epidemics is due in great part to the work and vigilance of those who, in the past, have been pioneers in the work of prevention of disease.

The one case of Typhoid Fever which was reported during the year was infected through the consumption of ice cream at Aberystwyth, where a small epidemic resulted as a result of a "carrier" infecting the ice cream. The doctor who was called in became suspicious and had examinations made which confirmed the case to be one of Typhoid Fever and she was at once isolated and precautions taken against the possible spread of the disease in Ludlow. There were, however, no further cases.

An interesting case was one of Food Poisoning through the consumption of a custard made with duck eggs. The organism involved in these cases is *B. ærtrycke* (*Salmonella typhi-murium*) and it was isolated from this patient. The man infected had eaten a custard made with duck eggs about 24 hours before he was seized with severe abdominal pain and became very seriously ill indeed. Several cases of this type of food poisoning have been reported during the last 20 years or more and many have proved fatal. It is of importance that the public should know of the danger of eating insufficiently-cooked duck eggs, especially in custards, mayonnaise, etc.

It was not found possible to trace the source of the eggs in this case as they had come from a packing station, but no other cases were reported.

VACCINATION AND IMMUNISATION.

Under the National Health Services Act, 1946, Part III, the above services will be transferred to the County Council. Compulsory Vaccination against Small Pox is to cease but every effort will be made by the County Health Officials to get as large a percentage of children vaccinated as is possible. Diphtheria Immunisation also will be the duty of the County Council through their Health Department, and a scheme has been drawn up outlying the County Council's proposals with regard to these services and this has been submitted to the Ministry of Health for approval.

The results of Diphtheria Immunisation in Ludlow have been very satisfactory as for four years there has been no case of the disease notified in the town.

Year.			Cases notified.
1941	...	...	10
1942	...	...	6
1943-46	...	...	0

Both in Vaccination and Immunisation the County Health Department hope to get the assistance of Private Practitioners who can do much to obtain the parents' consent to having their children protected against the two diseases—Small Pox and Diphtheria.

At the 31st December, 1946, it was estimated that 63% of the children under five years and 96% of the children from 5—15 years had been protected against Diphtheria.

ISOLATION HOSPITAL ACCOMMODATION.

Cases of Infectious Disease requiring hospital treatment and isolation are sent to Monkmoor Hospital (Shrewsbury & Atcham Joint Hospital Board) if beds are available, but no beds are reserved for Ludlow patients. This leads to difficulties when Monkmoor Hospital cannot take cases, and it would be better if some definite reservation of beds could be arranged either with the Joint Board or with some other isolation hospital authority. With the coming into existence of the new Hospital Boards, no doubt provision will be made for all cases of Infectious Disease which require isolation. Isolation Hospitals will have to serve larger areas in the future as at present some of the smaller ones are practically empty for a great part of the year, and also have difficulties in getting nursing staff, which makes it difficult for them to carry on at all.

Medical Practitioners are asked to get into touch with the Medical Officer of Health (Telephone No. Pontesbury 74) before sending a case in, but if he cannot be contacted immediately will they please telephone to the hospital directly (Shrewsbury 2510). Mild cases of Scarlet Fever are not at present being sent in to hospital if they can be nursed at home without danger to others.

TUBERCULOSIS.

The number of cases on the register as at 31st December, 1946, was as follows :-

MALES.		FEMALES.		Total.
Pulmon.	Non-pulmon.	Pulmon.	Non-pulmon.	
16	11	13	7	47

These figures show an increase of two male pulmonary cases on the register and a decrease of one female non-pulmonary case as compared with the previous year.

NEW CASES NOTIFIED.—Eight new cases were notified—all being of pulmonary type. Of these, six were male and two female cases. This is four fewer than last year when there were twelve new cases.

DEATHS.—The number of deaths registered as from Tuberculosis was six. Four were from Pulmonary Tuberculosis (two male and two female) and the other two were from the Non-pulmonary type.

DEATH-RATES.—The death-rates for the Borough were as follows, the rates for Pulmonary and Non-pulmonary Tuberculosis being given separately :-

	Ludlow	Eng. & Wales (1945)
D.R. per 1,000 (Pulmonary T.B.)	0·657	0·515
„ „ (Non-pulmonary T.B.)	0·328	0·099
	<hr/>	<hr/>
All forms	0·985	0·614
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Although the death-rate this year was above that for the country as a whole, the rate for the Borough over several years is not excessive. In dealing with such a small number of the population one or two extra deaths in any year may double the death-rate for that year.

CANCER DEATH-RATE.

The number of deaths from Cancer was thirteen, of which five were males and eight females. This gives a death-rate of 2·135 per 1,000 of the population.

CAUSES OF DEATH, 1946.

Cause	Number of Deaths.
I. Heart Disease ...	36
II. Cancer ...	13
III. Intra-cranial Vascular Diseases ...	11
IV. Tuberculosis ...	6
V. Diseases of Infants ...	6
VI. Bronchitis ...	4
VII. Pnuemonia ...	4
VIII. Road Traffic Accidents ...	3
IX. All other causes ...	16
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Total ...	99
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